

# ***2010 STATE OF THE COUNCIL ADDRESS***



**THURSDAY, 28 JANUARY 2010**



**REPORTED BY  
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NATIONAL CADET ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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Commanders, Deputy Chiefs of Staff for and Directors of Cadet Programs, Senior Advisors, Council Representatives, and to all cadets: Good evening!

I am Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Zachary King, the Chairman of your National Cadet Advisory Council, and I am honored to address you this evening and report to you the State of the Council.

Now don't applaud yet, I only said I was reporting it, I didn't say whether it was good or not. No, I'm kidding, but I like your enthusiasm! In fact, the state of the 2009-2010 Council is better than it has ever been. For the NCAC and for most councils across the nation, we are in excellent shape.

This is my third year serving the NCAC. My first was as an Assistant Representative while chairing the North East Region. My second year (this past year) was as a Primary Representative while serving as Vice to the NCAC. And now, in this term, I am honored to serve you today as your NCAC Chairman.

My first term serving CAC was seven years ago and I cannot believe that it has been eight, going on nine years since I started in this organization at the age of 12. I started as a Squadron Assistant Representative, and slowly made my way up to Wing Chair. But I never believed that I would be where I am today, I had never imagined it. I didn't even know that there was an NCAC, or that the position of Chairman existed, which brings me to my first point for this evening.

I want to prevent cadets today from being unaware of the opportunities that exist with Cadet Advisory Councils. I have been a member of other youth organizations, and it is a very unique element that we have in our cadet program. It is an internal body that cadets can be a part of to voice their opinions and their concerns in improving the organization. I've always considered Cadet Advisory Councils to be the congress of Civil Air Patrol. With our representative structures, with our parliamentary proceedings, we very much so resemble our nation's legislature.

My purpose of making this address this evening is to report to you what we're doing, the work that we are accomplishing on the national level and throughout CAC, because I feel it is our responsibility to you, to report exactly what we're doing to improve this cadet program for you.

Just yesterday, you heard our president give the State of the Union Address, and obviously this address is modeled off that. And you may ask "Why is the NCAC Chairman giving a State of the Council Address? What is a State of the Council Address?" Well, obviously, it is the President's constitutional duty to report to the people of this nation the State of the Union. In turn, governors give state of the state addresses, and organizations give annual reports. We, as Civil Air Patrol, will be giving our annual report to Congress on February 25<sup>th</sup>. We will be marching up to Capitol Hill, well, we'll actually be taking the Metro... but we'll be going to Capitol Hill to deliver our annual report and speak with our representatives, our legislatures, our senators who work for us and represent us.

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So that is what I am doing tonight, reporting to you what we have accomplished over the course of this term so far as a CAC, and what we're still looking to accomplish in the time that we have left.

I am going to be straight forward in addressing the challenges that this council has faced so far this term. Now, I know that many people believe that the National Cadet Advisory Council was "out of touch" with the lower levels of the organization. They believe that we are unproductive, that we cannot accomplish anything, and that we do not represent the best interests of the cadets – those whom we were sent out to represent.

Well, at the Summer National Board meeting, we received some excellent advice, and that was to dispel these rumors, all we needed to do was tell the truth: tell our true story, tell the people, the cadets, what it is that we are doing for them and to improve the organization.

This Council has done some great work over the past many, many years. But the problem is that not everyone knows it. We do great things but we don't tell you about it. So that is one thing that we have been working over the course of this term so far to do, is to improve our image, to improve our communication with all levels and all echelons of CAC and the cadet program as a whole to let you, the cadet, know exactly what we're trying to do to improve the organization.

My first goal for this term was to improve our outreach. I want the NCAC to be accessible to all cadets. I want every CAC rep., and every Chair to be accessible. I want all cadets to know who their representatives are, and that they have the ability to voice their ideas and their concerns and their ideas for the improvement of any part of the organization through their representatives. That's what's important, and that's what we needed first.

Second from there, in making us more accessible, we needed to improve our communication channels. So now, we're launching a new website [www.cac.cap.gov](http://www.cac.cap.gov). From there, we're on *facebook* and we're trying to professionally represent the National Cadet Advisory Council and reach out to the cadets and allow them to provide us with feedback on the issues and the items on our agenda.

With that, the third thing that we can do to improve that image, to maintain that image is to keep our commitments, and keep our promise – the promise that we are responsible to each of you as your representatives.

My second key point for this evening is to talk about our structure. Now we should have representatives at the Squadron, Wing, Region, and National levels. Filling all those positions is how we communicate. That ties hand-in-hand, as I said, with our outreach and our communication. We need those positions filled so we have those channels of communication down those echelons so that we can communicate and keep the cadets updated on what's going on.

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But also, we need to hear from the cadets, what they think of what we're doing... their opinions of the latest developments. And without that structure, and without those positions being filled, without 100% across the board, across the nation, we can't be as effective as we are able to be. We are not as effective as we need to be.

If you think about it, there are 52 wings in this organization. There are 52 cards in a deck. I don't know about you but I don't know many card games you can play without a full deck, so with us not having each of those wing positions and those region positions above and even the squadron positions filled, it's like trying to play a game without a full deck of cards.

We have set forth specific goals and objectives to accomplish over the course of this term, but we need your help. We need you to get involved. We want to hear your ideas. We want to hear what you have to say. We want to hear what you think is best in improving our cadet program.

My third and final point for this evenings address is talk to you a little bit about what we have done so far this term. When we started the term, I set forth an addition to our current motto which is "Representing Cadets Across the Nation", but I thought that our motto should also embody "Leading the Forefront of Today's Cadet Program" because that is exactly what we need to do. We should be setting the example for all cadets. Something else that I set forth when we started this term was that I wanted us to think with the end in mind. What were our goals? What were our objectives? What would our legacy be? And that is what I proposed to the council, I asked, "What would our legacy be? What do we want to accomplish over the course of this term? And what are we as the 2009-2010 Council going to be remembered for?" In thinking about that, it really comes down to who will remember us and why? Well, it needs to be the cadets at the local squadron, and that's what we need to improve. We need to improve our outreach and let the cadets at the local squadron know what we're doing for them.

This term, we are working closer than we ever have with our National Commander, the National Staff, the Cadet Team, and our commanders on the issues that are really facing today's cadet program. We're working with the Cadet Team on different elements of the upcoming leadership curriculum which will come out in April along with our new online testing system. There are some great things we are putting forth with Region Leadership Schools. We're trying to create templates for curriculum and guides so that regions can establish these schools if they haven't already done so.

We're also trying to set forth handbooks for squadrons to use in planning activities whether it is a weekend activity, or whether it is a community event. These are some of the many things we're working on.

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Along the lines of working with the cadet Competition, I am honored to serve as your Cadet Coordinator for the 2010 NCC which is going to be in Oregon again this year, and we're doing some great things working hand-in-hand with the NCC staff to improve the Cadet Competition for all of you. And I hope that you are involved; I know it is Cadet Competition season and those Wing Competitions and Region Competitions are on their way – I hope you're excited.

We're looking to improve our safety culture. We're also taking another look at the Staff Duty Analysis Program (SDA). We think that there is some good there, but we feel that the purpose of the SDA has been lost in translation. It could be more efficient, it could be more reader-friendly. Or do we need SDA's at all? We're really trying to dive into those issues working hand-in-hand with the Cadet Team.

One of the biggest items on our agenda is the Cadet Physical Fitness Test (CPFT). This agenda item has been on the NCAC's purview for quite some time. It has gone back and forth on the agenda and nothing has ever come about, so I said, "This term, we're going to take a firm stance. Does change need to be made to the Cadet Physical Fitness Test? And what is that change going to be? And we are going to move forward with recommending exactly what that change is." So right now we are looking at many different options. We've tried to target the key issues with the physical fitness test and create a new structure that works best for the cadets in the program. With that, you may be seeing some communication coming out from your region and wing representatives with some specific questions and some new possible ideas of how we can better formulate the CPFT and the scoring system to work better for you.

For the cadets at the local level, we started out in a previous term working on something called the Cadet Guidance Program, and our goal with this is to set forth a packet the cadets receive when they join the organization. This isn't a brochure or a pamphlet, but it is something they can truly utilize. First, it's going to introduce all the elements of the cadet program, we're trying to wrap everything into one from Emergency Services, to Aerospace, to the Cadet Program, everything as a whole. What are your different opportunities? We want cadets to be aware of everything they can do in this program – but we also want parents to be aware of the many opportunities a cadet can achieve in this organization. So with that, the first thing they see is everything that they can do, then they can pick their interest. Maybe you only like to do Emergency Services, maybe you like Drill Team, maybe you want to fly. Whatever it is, you can cater this organization to your interests. And with that packet, we are trying to create a chart that will allow you to plot the course of your cadet career. That is why we are calling it a guidance program, almost like choosing your college courses toward your degree – whatever you want your "major" to be in Civil Air Patrol, or whatever you want to come out with and work toward, it gives cadets a strategic way to work with their cadet staff at their unit level, and with their unit commanders, and with their parents in planning and trying to get as much as they can out of the tremendous opportunities from this organization.

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Another item that we're working on is a film production, by-cadets-for-cadets. Since we're trying to increase the structure and the efficiency of the CAC and the productivity of Cadet Advisory Councils, we're going to create an informational video that we want to send out to everyone talking about CAC. It will cover how CAC's can be used, and how you can best utilize the opportunities within.

Now I can talk for quite some time more about all the things we're working on, but I'll spare you of that. I won't put you through it, but I do invite you to take a look at our annual report which will be coming out very shortly, in just over a week. This is something we intend to do for years to come. But to put it on paper, to put out exactly what we've accomplished, and what we've done. I hope tonight that I've given you a summary of what we've been working on, but if you would like more information you could take a look at our report. If you'd like a copy, please e-mail us at [ncac@cac.cap.gov](mailto:ncac@cac.cap.gov). Yes, it is very poetic, but that is our e-mail address, and you can reach out to us and we shall send a copy to you directly.

All we have, as the 2009-2010 Council, is 365 days. That's it. One year, one term, to make a difference. We only have 216 days left, and I assure you that we are not going to waste a single one of them. We're going to take advantage of this term; we've realized the impact that we can have, the change that we can make, the difference we can make, and how we can affect the cadets.

You are the leaders in the future of this organization, and the future of this country, and the future of businesses... this is where you're going to get your foundation in that leadership and in that discipline and build such great friendships and relationships with many people and connections that you will keep for years to come.

To end my address this evening, I would like to provide you with a quote from President Kennedy. During one of his State of the Union Addresses, where he said: "It is my task to report to you, the state of the union, it is everyone's task to improve it."

I encourage, and I invite, and we as a National Cadet Advisory Council challenge every cadet to become involved and to speak to your representatives, or to become a representative – get involved with CAC, let your voice be heard!

On behalf of the National Cadet Advisory Council, I thank you for your attention this evening and for bearing with me. I thank you for your service, and I thank you for your volunteer spirit.

*Semper vigilans*, and Good Night!